

ADVOCACY & LEGISLATION



MoALPHA Legislative Committee

- Michael Herbert, Miller County Health Center
- Scott Clardy, Columbia/Boone County Health Department
- Kelly Volmer, Jefferson County Health Department
- Diane Weber, MoALPHA

Governmental Services Group

- Contracted by MoALPHA to provide lobbying and advocacy for Missouri's LPHAs.
- Office in Jefferson City
- Will Marrs and Kelly Richardson
- GSG Website: <https://govservicesgroup.com/>

Monitoring of Legislation that impacts Public Health

- During session, we send out weekly updates that are written by our legislative consultant, Will Marrs. They either come from Mike Herbert (Miller County) or Diane Weber (MOALPHA)
 - *If not getting updates, please let us know*
- If you know of something not on this report, please let us know
- Fiscal Notes
- We may request that you contact your local elected officials

2020 Passed Legislation (limited session)

- Vaping not permitted on public school property, including buses
- Medical marijuana edibles can't be in the shape of animals, humans, or fruit.
- Eliminated helmet requirement on motorcycles except for certain circumstances
- Free COVID 19 testing (Per appropriations, DHSS may use federal funds to cover cost of testing for non-insured people with “active” disease.”)

Monitored legislation that did NOT pass

- PDMP, HB 1693 Rep Rehder
 - *Possibly would have passed with more time*
 - *Unfortunately her term expires, need to find a new champion*
- Tobacco Products, HB 2673 Rep Taylor and SB 1005 Rep Rowden (even though the feds passed T21, it is still necessary for each state to adopt similar language to be eligible for certain funding)
- LPHA Authority Threatened in SB 617 and SB 644

SB 617 & SB 644, HB 1583

- Representative Dohrman (Johnson, Pettis, Saline) attempted adding language to SB617 and SB644 modifying RSMo 192.300 **“A county health board, or director or hired personnel thereof, shall only act in an advisory capacity to a county commission or other county executive.”**
 - *This could have led to LPHAs not having authority to pass orders, ordinances, and rules that have a public health impact.*
 - *205.100 requires the Commissioner to appoint the local health director as the local health authority each February*
 - *19 CSR Division 20 Chapter 20 consists of a variety of rules that give LPHAs authority to do specific things (or require us to do things)*
- Representative Haden (Audrain, Callaway) and others have introduced bills, including HB 1583, that prevent LPHAs from having any authority with agricultural facilities. Some stated that LPHAs are not permitted on the property. This would prevent follow up on septic complaints or inspections if the facility had a retail operation onsite. Could have also impacted communicable disease investigations.

HB 29 Rep. J. Murphy (St. L County)

- Received fiscal note on Friday, GSG is investigating
 - *Might not be allowed because it isn't within the scope of the special session*
- Adding a new section to Chapter 67 that limits the length of an order that an official or government agency can impose closing or partially closing businesses or limit public gatherings.
- Clearly another effort to eliminate local health authority.

The Future

- LPHA authority will be questioned every legislative session. A handful of legislators are not happy with their local health agencies
- Generally an anti-vaccine bill each session
- We must do a better job of establishing relationships and educating our legislators
- We must do a better job of adapting to current legislative climates
 - *Public Health is naturally a more liberal program*
 - *Market our agencies a little differently with an ultra conservative climate*
- We must recognize and partner with legislators (Dem and Rep) that support our mission
 - *Consider being proactive and introducing good sound legislation*
 - *MoCPHE and MoALPHA collaborated to write language that eliminated some immunization exemptions (but has yet to identify a champion legislator)*

Recommendations

- Get to know your local Representatives and Senators
 - *Research what is important to them, their background, etc.*
 - *In the off season, invite them to your agency*
 - Tour, Review of all the programs
 - Highlight success stories and programs
 - Discuss goals and objectives for the community
 - *During the next session, request a visit with them at the Capitol. MoALPHA can assist with organizing appointments and/or group tours during statewide meetings*

Recommendations

- Develop a good working relationship with your Commissioner(s)
 - *Especially now since the CARES Act funding goes through them*
 - *It is important for them to know our responsibilities*
 - *Share the statutes and rules*
 - Are they appointing you every February?
 - *Do they support LPHA authority?*
 - Do they want the responsibility?

Use COVID for some good!

- Unless you live off the grid, everyone has learned a little about public health this year.
- Gives you something to talk about, everyone has this in common! Great ice breaker with your elected officials.
- An opportunity for all of us to drive home the importance of LPHA authority and why it is necessary to implement important public health interventions, sometimes as orders.
- If your legislators are upset with how the Stay at Home/Social Distancing orders were utilized, try to understand why. Statewide and if you had local orders.
 - *This will help us improve our emergency response plans too!*

Communication

- Ultimately our goal is for law makers to see us as subject matter experts, and have mutual respect for one another
- To call us when a constituent is encouraging them to introduce or support bills that have a public health impact
- For us to establish an easy method to contact our legislator when we need help
 - *Maybe it is just their house.mo.gov email...but maybe you get their cell!*
- Encourage them to follow your social media, and even better share your posts

Missouri Association of Local Public Health Agencies

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